



Rep. Carolyn McCarthy National Service Bill Signed by President Obama

President Signs Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act

WASHINGTON DC—On Tuesday, April 21, 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, a bill sponsored by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (NY-04).

Rep. McCarthy stood with President Obama as he signed the bill, his first major bipartisan initiative to get enacted, which will launch a new era of American service and create opportunities for citizens of all ages to play a part in our nation's recovery.

“President Kennedy told a generation to, ‘Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.’ Now a President Obama has signed this important legislation that will inspire a new generation of service and volunteerism in our nation. In calling for a national service bill, President Obama has renewed the spirit of a practice in our country that is as old as the Union itself: the call to public service. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act answers that call,” said Rep. McCarthy.

This bill creates volunteer and service opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds. There are specific provisions that would expand service opportunities not only to school age children, but also to veterans, retirees and senior citizens giving thousands of older Americans the opportunity to share their knowledge and skills for the benefit of their communities.

The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act will build a national infrastructure for service and volunteerism and makes an historic investment in way our service programs are administered. The bill focuses on building our national service participation while providing much needed streamlining to reduce administrative burdens.

Finally, the bill includes a requirement that the Corporation conduct a nationwide “Call to Service” campaign to encourage all of our nation’s citizens to engage in service. As part of this campaign, Americans will be urged to observe September 11th as a National Day of Service and Remembrance.

“Public service and volunteerism provide the means through which Americans can give back to their communities while gaining the tools they need to achieve their own goals. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act will enrich the lives of all of those who answer the call to serve. This is a once-in-a-generation bill that will change the fabric of our nation for decades to come,” said Rep. McCarthy.

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